

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MAY 31, 1973

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY
(Reykjavik, Iceland)

THE WHITE HOUSE

PRESS CONFERENCE

OF

DR. HENRY A. KISSINGER
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT FOR NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

HOTEL LOFTLEIDIR

AT 6:20 P.M. IST

MR. ZIEGLER: You know the meeting this afternoon lasted two hours, just over two hours. So the two Presidents have met now for close to five hours. We will post the precise amount of time they have met today following the briefing.

Dr. Kissinger, as you know, participated in both the morning session and the afternoon session with President Nixon and President Pompidou and he is here this afternoon to brief you on the discussions and to answer some of your questions.

We do have a dinner to attend, so we want to keep this to about a half an hour.

Dr. Kissinger will begin the briefing with an opening comment.

DR. KISSINGER: Ladies and gentlemen, I will begin by reading my notes on what President Pompidou and President Nixon agreed at the end of the meeting could be said. It is not a formal statement, but it was agreed to by both sides that this statement would be made and here it is. I repeat, this is not a formal statement. These are the notes to which both President Pompidou and President Nixon agreed as reflecting the tenor of their conversations.

As Ron Ziegler already told you, this morning the two Presidents carried out a review of the world situation and of relations within the Atlantic alliance in a useful and constructive spirit.

In the course of this review, President Pompidou stressed the important role by the United States forces in Europe and the danger of a unilateral reduction of such forces.

President Nixon indicated that he fully concurred with President Pompidou's assessment.

In connection with what we in the United States have called the "Year of Europe", the two Presidents have agreed that this concept should be carried out in the closest cooperation between France and the United States by means of bilateral talks, exchanges at a high level.

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Foreign Minister Jobert and I will conduct some of these exchanges and our first meeting on that subject will take place on June 7th, in Paris, when I am there for the Vietnamese negotiations.

Negotiations within the alliance on specific issues which are now under way or which may be started will continue in established forums. As progress is made in these forums, the two Presidents agree that a meeting at the Deputy Foreign Minister level, on an ad hoc basis, might be desirable to see how the results of those bilateral exchanges and the multilateral exchanges going on in the other forums fit together for possible incorporation in a declaration of principles.

Whether or not there should be a summit of the European leaders with the President will be decided after the results of all these other negotiations can be evaluated.

In any event, President Nixon will go to Europe to carry on his contacts on a bilateral basis with the various leaders.

On trade matters, the two sides agreed to proceed in a cooperative and constructive spirit. On monetary matters, the French President gave a thorough presentation of his views and President Nixon agreed that we would study them most attentively and with a helpful attitude.

The two Presidents agreed that our interests are identical and that the only difference between our two nations concerns how we can best achieve common objectives.

Now this was the substance of the discussions today.

In addition to the subjects which I have read to you, there was a brief discussion of Southeast Asia and the Middle East, subjects that were covered at greater length in the meeting of the Foreign Ministers.

Tomorrow, President Nixon and President Pompidou will address the bilateral relations between the United States and France and we are confident that these talks will be characterized by the same constructive and friendly spirit that was so evident today.

Now, I will be glad to answer some questions.

Q Dr. Kissinger, was there a date, or a rough date set for the President's trip to Europe?

DR. KISSINGER: No, but we talked in general terms of the time frame I gave you at our last meeting, the end of October or early November.

Q Dr. Kissinger, in expressing the statement about whether or not there would be a summit meeting depends on these results, could President Pompidou speak for Brandt, Heath and the others?

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DR. KISSINGER: Obviously, President Pompidou speaks for France. Obviously the utility of the summit meeting depends on the willing participation of the principal leaders. President Pompidou did not pretend to speak for Heath or Brandt, both of whom have expressed their views on the subject before.

But it has always been our view that the summit was not an end of itself. You remember I said this at the White House before we left. What we feel is necessary is a discussion of the future of the Atlantic alliance and of the Atlantic relationship.

The first step in this direction was to establish procedures by which this review could be carried out. These procedures have now been substantially established and what the next step should be we will leave to the evolution of these discussions.

Q Dr. Kissinger, this sounds like a concession on the part of France in terms of setting a framework of principles. Is that true, was this worked out today? It sounds like it is more conciliatory than you had before. And also the linkage between the multilateral and bilateral.

DR. KISSINGER: No. There has never been any debate about the fact that bilateral talks could go on side by side with multilateral talks. Our position has always been that we did not intend, what we have called the "Year of Europe," either to undermine European unity-- on the contrary, we want to foster it -- or to push it through against the opposition of major allies.

And, therefore, we had always envisaged and had never found any opposition to the idea that bilateral talks and multilateral talks would go on side by side.

As for these results, we have not approached today's discussion from the attitude that one side would win and another side would lose. Each side had expressed certain views prior to the meetings. I told you on Tuesday that I did not believe that the French views and ours were as antithetical as some of the reports had indicated.

I think what we can say is that the two Presidents talked in a spirit of allies and of men who have been meeting for a long time and looked at the practical methods by which we could determine what there was in our proposal and set up the procedures by which they could be realized.

Q Did you submit a draft of the framework of principles to the President?

DR. KISSINGER: We have not submitted a draft of the framework of principles to anybody at this point and we will not do so until we have had some preliminary bilateral discussions with some of the countries most concerned.

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Q Henry, could you spell out in some detail what you talked about as differences and how we can best achieve our common objectives, what are those differences?

DR. KISSINGER: I said that the differences, such as they are, concern disagreement on how to achieve common objectives. The meetings today were not really conducted in a contentious spirit. It was not a catalogue of disagreement. It was rather in order to understand what the approach of each side was.

For example, we know the difference on the monetary question between our two countries. But I think also that we both aim for a stable system that brings into the monetary field the same degree of stability that we are hoping to bring into the international field by our political initiative.

There has been some discussion or some disagreement -- I can't really say disagreement -- but there has been perhaps a difference in emphasis as to how rigidly one should commit oneself to a particular procedure to follow in the discussions that are foreseen for this year.

It was resolved, on the basis the results of these discussions would guide the commitments to particular forums rather than tie ourselves now to a fixed forum.

But, as I have tried to point out, the differences were not as absolute as had been presented previously and the attitude was such to show this degree of progress.

Q Do the French now seem more clearly to see the larger political realities you have talked about in terms of putting it all together in the three major areas of concern?

DR. KISSINGER: I think the fact of the matter is that some of the problems that we have been reading about will, without any question, reappear in the actual discussions that are now going on.

The two Presidents spoke more in terms of basic objectives than in terms of solving every issue before the alliance and before the two countries.

I think the French understand better now -- but they, of course, will have to speak for themselves -- what we had in mind, which was not to use one area as blackmail for the other area, but rather to proceed to a general discussion by examining each of the areas and then seeing how they related to each other.

Q Can you say they agree on the basic objectives?

DR. KISSINGER: I am not the best man to speak for the French point of view. They have their own spokesman here.

I would say that we have worked out satisfactory procedures so that we can go ahead with the examination of the issues that we have wanted to put before the allies. Whether the basic objective will then emerge identical or different, we should leave to these negotiations.

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We have never said that we knew now what the common objective was. What we have said is that there is a need to attempt to define it and to establish a method for examining it. That I believe we have made some progress towards and we shall pursue it with conviction and with energy and we will begin our talks with Monsieur Jobert -- I will begin the bilateral talks -- next Thursday in Paris.

Q How do you now assess the prospects of getting a set of principles?

DR. KISSINGER: I will want to see how the discussions that are starting in the defense field, that are going on in the trade field, how the bilateral talks going on between us and the French and other European countries will develop.

Let me add it is clearly understood by the two Presidents that while we will conduct bilateral talks with France, we will also conduct bilateral talks with several other European countries as these negotiations proceed and I would rather leave the estimate of how well they will go for later.

We believe it is in the common interest to proceed. We will proceed very seriously with the attitude that nothing we develop will have any meaning unless it has the willing support of our European allies. So, we are not going to hand them an American blueprint. We are not going to proceed on the basis that we know best and we are not doing it from the basis of undermining European unity -- but rather strengthening it -- or detracting from those areas in which the Europeans believe autonomous action is desirable.

Q Henry, you made a reference at one point to not tying ourselves too rigidly to fixed procedures or fixed deadlines, something fixed. Was this a reference -- can we infer from that that you were talking about any specific or fixed commitment for a return to convertibility? Is that the reference there?

DR. KISSINGER: No, that was not the reference.

The question is, when I said that we are not wedded to fixed procedures and fixed deadlines, did I mean convertibility.

Of course, convertibility is one of the issues. Another issue is this: We don't want to say that there must be, for example, a summit meeting by October 15th or November 15th and then gear everything to an artificial deadline that we have established. It is possible that this could happen.

It is also possible the discussions this year will lead to a point where, at the time of the President's trip to Europe, some further bilateral talks are needed and the time is not yet ripe for such a meeting.

We are not wedded to one fixed procedure in achieving the general objective that we have set, or in defining its attainability.

Mr. Apple.

WDDP

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Q You said whether there would be a summit would depend on whether the bilateral and multilateral talks go well. That is exactly what the French and British said after the Heath-Pompidou meeting publically and then privately they said they saw no prospect whatever where the bilateral and multilateral negotiations could be brought to a point where a summit would be possible late this year. Would you comment on that, in light of this morning's meeting?

DR. KISSINGER: I would have no estimate on that on the basis of this morning's meeting. I think we will be in a much better position to judge this around July when some of the discussions will have actually been taking place and when perhaps the Deputy Foreign Ministers meeting is in the process of being organized or taking place.

Q Do you think it will be possible to develop a rational, reasonable possibility that a European summit can take place this fall?

DR. KISSINGER: I think there is a possibility, but I wouldn't want to tie ourselves to it. It really is too early to tell. I think that is the best answer I can give you.

Q Is it fair to say that we are more interested in having this summit in the fall than the French or some of the other Europeans and why would that be?

DR. KISSINGER: We are agnostic on the issue of the summit. It depends on what progress there has been made.

The French, I think it is correct to say, are somewhat more reluctant about the summit. The other Europeans, like the British and Germans, are perhaps a little closer to our point of view.

But I don't think it is important to fight a theological battle on that issue. It has never been put forward as a principal American objective. It was first stated as a possible means by Chancellor Brandt on the occasion of his visit to Washington.

We are prepared to examine it and we are prepared to participate in it if it is going to be useful, but we do not want to invest now in a great deal of debate on the issue of a forum when we have so much substance that needs to be discussed.

Q Do we have an agreement with other allies on these procedures you have outlined?

DR. KISSINGER: We have had preliminary talks with some other countries on these procedures and we believe they will look favorably on them, but I said the two Presidents envisaged this and it will, of course, have to be discussed in greater detail with all the other countries, including those with whom we did not have preliminary exchanges.

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MR. ZIEGLER: We have time for two more questions.
We will go to Jim and then over here.

Q What ideas or concepts might be included
in this declaration of principles?

DR. KISSINGER: First of all, we have to see whether
the negotiations as they progress lend themselves to a
declaration of principles.

As I said, I can only tell you what our idea is
and this is not a subject we have had an opportunity to discuss
fully with all the others. It is to state some goals and
purposes in the major areas, political, military and economic
which then can guide the negotiations in these areas and the
structures of the alliance over the next few years.

Again, we will be able to be more precise on this when
the other negotiations are somewhat further advanced.

Q What could be a possible framework for this
summit? You mentioned in Washington the EEC, or NATO, or
an ad hoc framework. What are you thinking of now?

DR. KISSINGER: I can't answer the question because
the two Presidents obviously did not discuss the framework
of a summit when they had not decided on a summit. My personal
guess would be it is more likely to be on an ad hoc basis
than on a basis within the framework of existing institutions
if it takes place. I want to repeat, that is a decision that
has deliberately been left for later.

Q Speaking of a European summit, what countries
do you have in mind that would be included?

DR. KISSINGER: I find it amazing at this press
conference most questions concern an issue which I said has
not been decided yet. The composition of a conference that has
not been agreed to is awfully hard to determine.

Q Are you going to talk to several countries
about it?

DR. KISSINGER: I would think it is the NATO countries,
plus those members of the EEC that are not members of NATO.

Q Are all of these negotiations going to take
place within an existing organism?

DR. KISSINGER: The trade and defense negotiations
will take place within existing organizations. The political
discussions will take place through diplomatic channels.

In addition, there will be intensive bilateral dis-
cussions and then, of course, there is this idea of the
Deputy Foreign Ministers.

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MR. ZIEGLER: Thank you very much.

We have copies of the President's toast for tonight which will be available immediately after this meeting.

Q You have been talking of great powers, but you have not mentioned any small power. You are in Iceland now. First, does the President of the United States know that the British are shooting Iceland out of NATO and what is he going to do about it? I am from the biggest newspaper in Iceland.

DR. KISSINGER: I understood the question, which was, does the United States understand there is shooting going on --

Q No. Does your government know that the British are shooting Iceland out of NATO because of their behavior in Iceland and what are the Americans doing about it?

DR. KISSINGER: The United States is aware of the tensions that exist between Britain and Iceland at this particular moment. The President had an opportunity to discuss this subject yesterday with your President, Prime Minister, and Foreign Minister who stated the Icelandic case very ably and very passionately.

I don't think it is appropriate on the occasion of a visit to Iceland, for the purpose of discussions with France, to take a formal U.S. position on this dispute. But I will say it pains us that two good friends of ours are in this controversy, that we hope very much that it can be amicably resolved and that we will do our best to contribute to a constructive solution.

THE PRESS: Thank you

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(AT 6:50 P.M. IST)